AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (*Currently amended*) An image processing apparatus comprising:

reading means for reading an image recorded on a recording material and obtaining a current image characteristic data of the image;

acquisition means for acquiring a former image characteristic data which, when an image recorded on the recording material was formerly read, was obtained based on a result of the former a reading of the image and stored in storage means in a previous image processing session;

calculation means which calculates, based on the current image characteristic data obtained from image data obtained by the reading of said reading means, and the former image characteristic data acquired by said acquisition means, a correction parameter for correcting image quality deterioration of the image; and

correction means which corrects, based on the correction parameter calculated by said calculation means, the image data.

2. (*Currently amended*) An image processing apparatus comprising:

reading means for reading an image recorded on a recording material and obtaining current image data of the image;

acquisition means for acquiring a former image characteristic data which was obtained based on a result of a reading of the image in a previous image processing session ~~when an image recorded on the recording material was formerly read~~, and acquiring information for specifying former reading conditions ~~in the former reading~~ of the previous image processing session, the former image characteristic data and the ~~information~~ former reading conditions being stored in storage means during the previous image processing session ~~when the image was formerly read~~;

calculation means which, based on ~~the information for specifying~~ the former reading conditions ~~acquired by said acquisition means~~, converts ~~at least one of~~ the current image data ~~obtained by the reading of said reading means and image characteristic data acquired by said acquisition means~~ so that ~~both~~ the converted image data ~~each becomes data~~ is substantially equal to an image data that would have been obtained by reading

[[an]] the image under ~~similar~~ the former reading conditions, and thereafter, obtains a current image characteristic data from the converted image data, and based on both the current and former image characteristic data, calculates a correction parameter for correcting image quality deterioration of the image; and

correction means which, based on the correction parameter calculated by said calculation means, corrects the image data.

3. (*Original*) An image processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the reading conditions include at least one of an image reading position on the recording material, a spectral sensitivity of said reading means used for reading, and a resolution at which an image is read.

4. (*Original*) An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the recording material is a photographic film and the storage means is any one of a semiconductor memory mounted to a cartridge in which the photographic film is accommodated, and a magnetic recording layer formed with a magnetic material being applied to the photographic film.

5.   (*Original*) An image processing apparatus according to claim **2**, wherein the recording material is a photographic film and the storage means is any one of a semiconductor memory mounted to a cartridge in which the photographic film is accommodated, and a magnetic recording layer formed with a magnetic material being applied to the photographic film.

6.   (*Original*) An image processing apparatus according to claim **1**, wherein the image characteristic data is data which represents a predetermined image characteristic amount for each of a fixed number of blocks into which an image is divided, and said calculation means compares image characteristic data obtained from the image data and image characteristic data acquired by said acquisition means for each of the blocks and calculates the correction parameter for each of the blocks.

7.   (*Original*) An image processing apparatus according to claim **2**, wherein the image characteristic data is data which represents a predetermined image characteristic amount for each of a fixed number of blocks into which an image is divided, and

said calculation means compares image characteristic data obtained from the image data and image characteristic data acquired by said acquisition means for each of the blocks and calculates the correction parameter for each of the blocks.

8.   (*Currently amended*) An image correcting method comprising the steps of:

reading an image recorded on a recording material and determining a current image characteristic data based on a result of the reading;

determining whether or not the image has been read in a previous image processing session;

if it is determined that the image has not been read in the previous image processing session, then storing the obtained current image characteristic data in storage means; and

if it is determined that the image has been read in the previous image processing session, then:

obtaining a former image characteristic data from the storage means;

calculating a correction parameter for correcting image quality deterioration of the image based on the current and former image characteristic data; and

correcting the image data based on the calculated correction parameter.

reading an image recorded on a recording material, obtaining image characteristic data based on a result of the reading, storing the obtained image characteristic data in storage means and, thereafter, when an image recorded on the recording material is read, obtaining image characteristic data from image data obtained by the a latter reading;

based on the obtained image characteristic data and the image characteristic data stored in the storage means, calculating a correction parameter for correcting image quality deterioration of the image; and

correcting the image data based on the calculated correction parameter.

9.   (*Currently amended*)   An   image   correcting   method comprising the steps of:

effecting a first reading for an image recorded on a recording material in a first image processing session;

obtaining a first image characteristic data based on a result of the first reading; and

storing, in storage means, the obtained first image characteristic data together with a first information for specifying reading conditions in the first reading, and thereafter, when a second reading is effected for an image recorded on the recording material in a second image processing session, based on the information for specifying reading conditions in the first reading, ~~which is acquired from the storage means,~~ converting ~~at least one of~~ the image data obtained by the second reading ~~and the image characteristic data acquired from the storage means~~ so that ~~both~~ the image data ~~each~~ becomes ~~data~~ substantially equal to data that would have been obtained by reading [[an]] the image under similar ~~reading~~ conditions substantially equal to conditions specified in the first information, and thereafter, obtaining a second image characteristic data from the converted image data;

based on both <u>first and second</u> image characteristic data,
calculating a correction parameter for correcting image quality
deterioration of the image; and

correcting the image data based on the calculated
correction parameter.

10. (*Original*) An image correcting method according to
claim **9**, wherein the reading conditions include at least one of
an image reading position on the recording material, a
spectral sensitivity of reading means used for reading, and a
resolution at which an image is read.

11. (*Original*) An image correcting method according to
claim **8**, wherein the recording material is a photographic film
and the storage means is any one of a semiconductor memory
mounted to a cartridge in which the photographic film is
accommodated, and a magnetic recording layer formed with a
magnetic material being applied to the photographic film.

12. (*Original*) An image correcting method according to
claim **9**, wherein the recording material is a photographic film

and the storage means is any one of a semiconductor memory mounted to a cartridge in which the photographic film is accommodated, and a magnetic recording layer formed with a magnetic material being applied to the photographic film.

13. (*Original*) An image correcting method according to claim 8, wherein the image characteristic data is data which represents a predetermined image characteristic amount for each of a fixed number of blocks into which an image is divided, and said calculation step of the correction parameter is provided to compare image characteristic data obtained form the image data and the image characteristic data stored in the storage means for each of the blocks and calculate the correction parameter for each of the blocks.

14. (*Original*) An image correcting method according to claim 9, wherein the image characteristic data is data which represents a predetermined image characteristic amount for each of a fixed number of blocks into which an image is divided, and said calculation step of the correction parameter is provided to compare the both image characteristic data with each other for

each of the blocks and calculate the correction parameter for each of the blocks.

15. (*Currently amended*) An image processing method, comprising:

scanning an image ~~initially~~ recorded on a recording material to output a current image data;

retrieving initial image characteristics data and initial imaging conditions data of the image, wherein the initial imaging conditions data correspond to conditions upon which the image was [~~recorded~~] *scanned* initially <u>in a previous image processing session</u>; and

processing the current image data based on the initial image characteristics data and the initial imaging conditions data for outputting a corrected image data of the current image data.

16. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim 15, wherein:

the image is divided into a plurality of blocks such that initial image characteristics data include a plurality of

initial block characteristics data corresponding to each block of the image; and

the initial imaging conditions include at least one of a spectral sensitivity of an initial scanner used in the initial recording, an initial resolution, and an initial position of the image on the recording material.

17. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim 16, wherein block characteristics data includes at least one of average densities of color components within the block, color densities of a pixel determined to be a high light point of the block, and color densities of a pixel determined to be a shadow point of the block.

18. (*Previously presented*) The method of 16, wherein the processing step comprises:

compensating for differences between the initial imaging conditions and current imaging conditions;

determining whether a correction of the current image data is required based on a result of the compensating step; and

correcting the current image data based on a result of the determining step.

19. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **18**, wherein the compensating step comprises at least one of:

determining whether the spectral sensitivities of the initial scanner and a current scanner coincide and calculating a spectral sensitivity conversion factor when it is determined that the spectral sensitivities do not coincide; and

determining whether an initial reading position of the image on the recording material and a current reading position are different and correcting the current reading position when it is determined that the reading positions are different.

20. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **19**, wherein the compensating step further comprises determining whether an initial resolution and a current resolution are different and calculating a resolution correcting factor when it is determined that the resolutions are different.

21. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **18**, wherein the step of determining whether a correction of the current image data is required comprises:

dividing the current image data into a plurality of blocks;

determining a plurality of current block characteristics data for each block of the current image data;

comparing each current block characteristics data with corresponding initiation block characteristics data; and

outputting a result based on the comparing step.

22. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **21**, wherein the outputting step comprises outputting a positive result if at least one current block characteristics data differs from the corresponding initial block characteristics data by a preset value or more.

23. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **18**, wherein the correcting step comprises:

dividing the current image data into a plurality of blocks;

calculating a block correction factor for each block of the current image data based on a difference between the current

block characteristics data and the corresponding initiation block characteristics data; and

correcting each pixel of each block of the current image data based on the corresponding block correction factor.

24. (*Previously presented*) The method of claim **23**, further comprising:

determining whether the spectral sensitivities of the initial scanner and a current scanner coincide; and

performing an inverse conversion of the corrected image data when it is determine that the spectral sensitivities do not coincide.